GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

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VOL. XXXV, NO. 9, NOVEMBER 26, 1956 . . . *To Know This World, Its Life*

► Liberia

► Horse of a Different Color

► Virgin Islands

► Olympic Flame Rekindled

► Glorious Greece

GREEK NOMADS in centuries-old costumes haul precious water near the Bulgarian border. Laden though she is with heavy cask, the woman at left continues to spin wool

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JEAN AND FRANC SHOR, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF

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the name held promise of liberty. In ensuing years, savage tribes attacked Liberian settlements. Tropical diseases struck.

Nonetheless, by 1847, Americo-Liberians declared themselves free and independent. Their self-governing Negro republic with government patterned after that of the United States was unique in Africa at that time. It is based on a Senate, a House of Representatives, and a constitution.

To a great extent, rubber shaped Liberia's destiny. The story is one of United States industrial pioneering. In the "Roaring Twenties" three enterprising Americans, old friends, became engrossed in the puzzle of finding a way to assure dependable rubber supply for their nation. Their names were Henry Ford, Thomas A. Edison, and Harvey S. Firestone. Each tackled the problem in a different way. Ford started a plantation in Brazil, but failed. Edison tried growing rubber with plants that could thrive in the United States, but with only partial success.

Harvey Firestone finally took the winning gamble when he sent his eldest son on a world-wide search for land suited to growing rubber. Liberia was the final choice. In 1926, Firestone secured rights to lease up to a million acres of the country for planting. The rubber industry gave the stumbling republic its first real foothold. On the verge of bankruptcy, her income suddenly soared. For the first time Liberians could have jobs, learn technical skills and new ways of life. In return, the United States got rubber. Today, about 40,000 Liberians

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Laden with latex, rubber plantation workers head for the collecting station

LIBERIAN EMBASSY

Liberia . . . RICHES FROM A RAIN FOREST

THE snarl of a Diesel engine echoes through Liberia's rain forest. Scolding monkeys scatter to treetops, making way for a load of rails. New industry throbs in the jungle. Raw rubber flows from plantations to waiting ships.

Americans can thank Liberia for many of the tires that sing along United States highways. Liberians are grateful, too. The United States helped put this west African republic, the size of Ohio, on the map. Its capital, Monrovia, is named for President James Monroe. Bright new buildings line its paved streets. There are honking taxis and dial telephones. Such modern details blur a century and a half when Liberia struggled just to survive.

Liberia's first settlers landed at the mouth of the Mesurado River in 1822. Freed slaves, sent by American colonization societies to find new homes in West Africa, founded a commonwealth and named it Liberia. Despite hardships,

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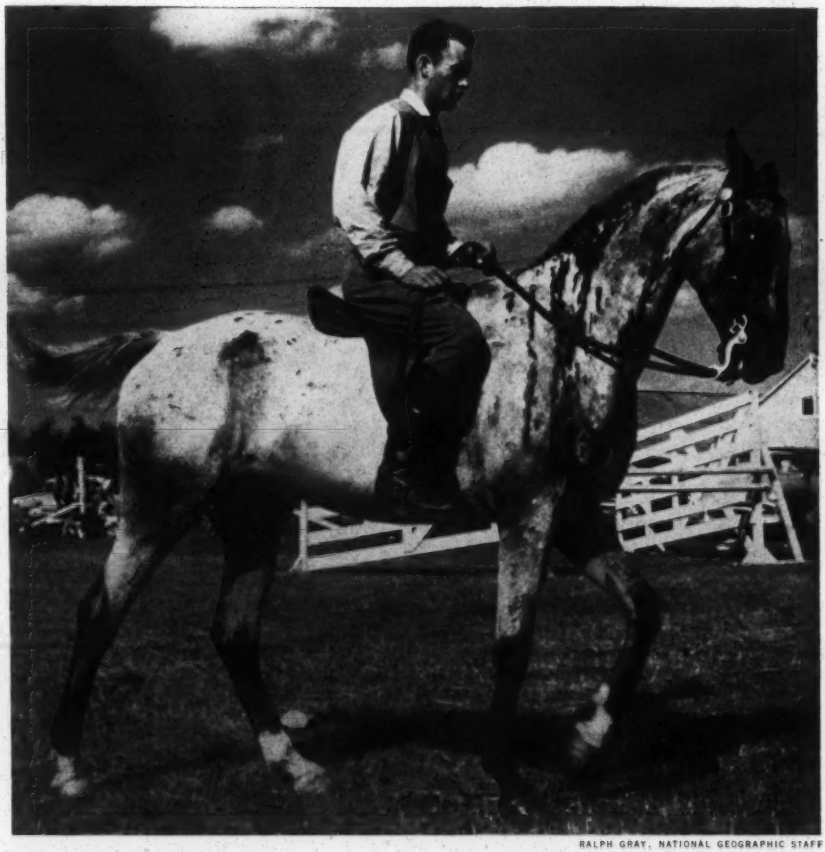


RALPH GRAY, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF

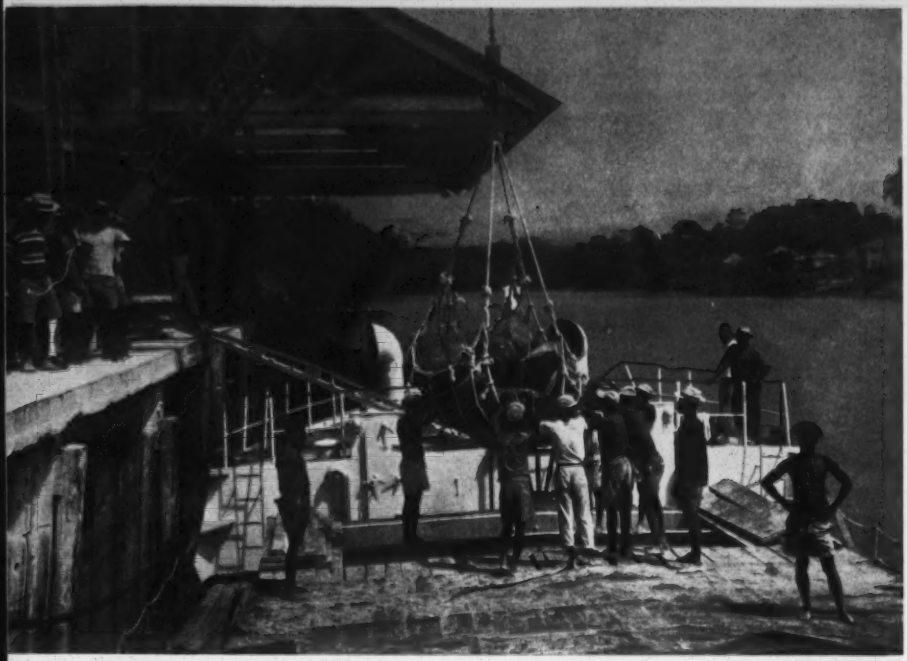
HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR

"BRING your Leica over here," Grant MacEwen said, "there aren't many horses like this one. It's an Appaloosa. You can tell by the light color, spotted coat, white eyes, strength, and savvy. If it were a dog, it would be a Dalmatian."

Grant knows horses. All afternoon, beneath a cobalt-blue Saskatchewan sky, I watched him judge classes and events in the Lloydminster show grounds. With almost a caress, he ran his hands over the "tears of blood" below the cropped mane.

"You couldn't count more than 50 Appaloosas 20 years ago, whereas the Shoshonis and Nez Percés used to own them by the thousands. It was of the Appaloosa and other peculiar mottled ponies of the west that cowboy-artist Charlie Russell said, 'they ain't bred by no Indians east of the Rockies.' Lewis and Clark had found this true when they started looking for hardy mounts to take their party over the Continental Divide in 1805. The Shoshonis provided them with 'fine anamalls', many of which 'would make a figure' in Virginia—appearing to be 'of an excellent race, lofty, eligantly formed, active and durable . . . and fat as seals.'

"Spaniards brought the splotched ancestors of the Appaloosa to America, but originally they came from India or China—some say the Vale of Fergana. By the time they got up to the Palouse country of eastern Washington they were a long way from home, but that's where their present name comes from. Chief Joseph of the Nez Percés had 3,000 of them, but when he was defeated in 1877 General Miles scattered the sad remnant. Now fanciers are breeding them again and their numbers and fame are on the rise—as in the days of the Mountain Men when the legendary 'fan-tailed Appaloosey' was the Paul Bunyan of horsedom."—R.G.



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MODERN DOCK on a jungle river loads rubber chunks bound for the United States

earn wages from the rubber industry and only recently a second major rubber concern has leased huge land tracts.

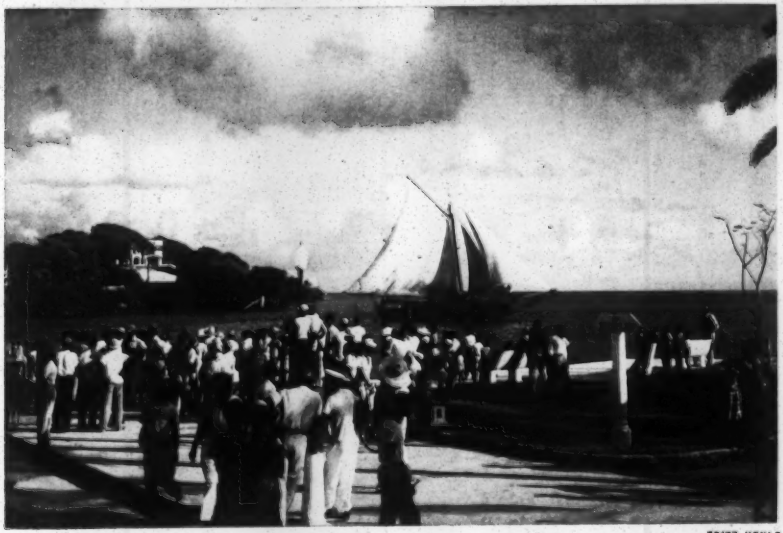
Iron is another promising resource for Liberia. For decades, engineers have eyed hidden mineral wealth in the Bomi Hills. But though the region lies only 45 miles north of Monrovia, tall, impenetrable forests armored it against human interference. Today imported steam shovels tear away wilderness to build roads, while a new railway bores inland from the coast to carry out ore as rich as any to be found on earth.

Despite progress, much of Liberia's population still inhabits remote thatch-roofed villages (page 99) and tiny farms, understanding more of witchcraft than of books or modern health practices. The United Nations and its agencies —UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO, and others—help grapple with problems of health, education, and agriculture. Liberia takes special pride in United Nations membership, recognizing U.N. Day as second only to her own Independence Day.

Liberia hasn't yet played all her cards. The great rain forests of the interior, dark and sullen, tangled with vines, hold some of the finest remaining evergreen forests in Africa. Man's industry and machines already gnaw at their primeval fringes. Some areas have yielded rich samples of valued tropical woods such as mahogony, teak, and ebony. Liberia's annual export of palm kernels, cocoa, coffee, piassava, and other products increases steadily. Traffic thickens in the busy port of Monrovia as little Liberia shows the stuff she's made of.—J.A.

LIBERIAN EMBASSY. © HARRIS & EWING

LIBERIAN PRESIDENT William Tubman meets President Eisenhower in Washington



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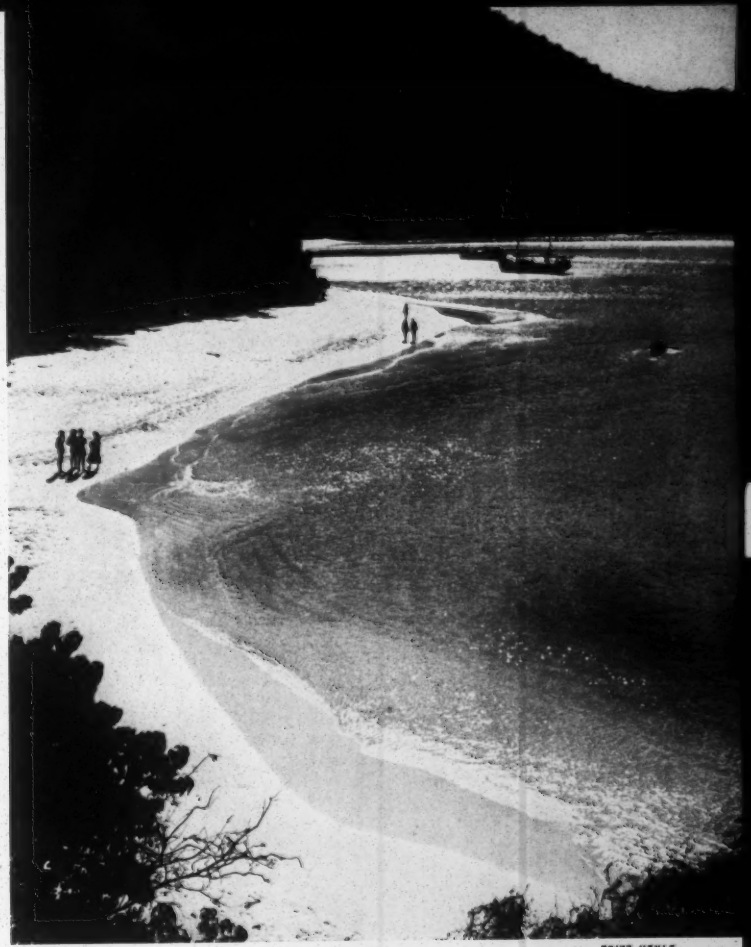


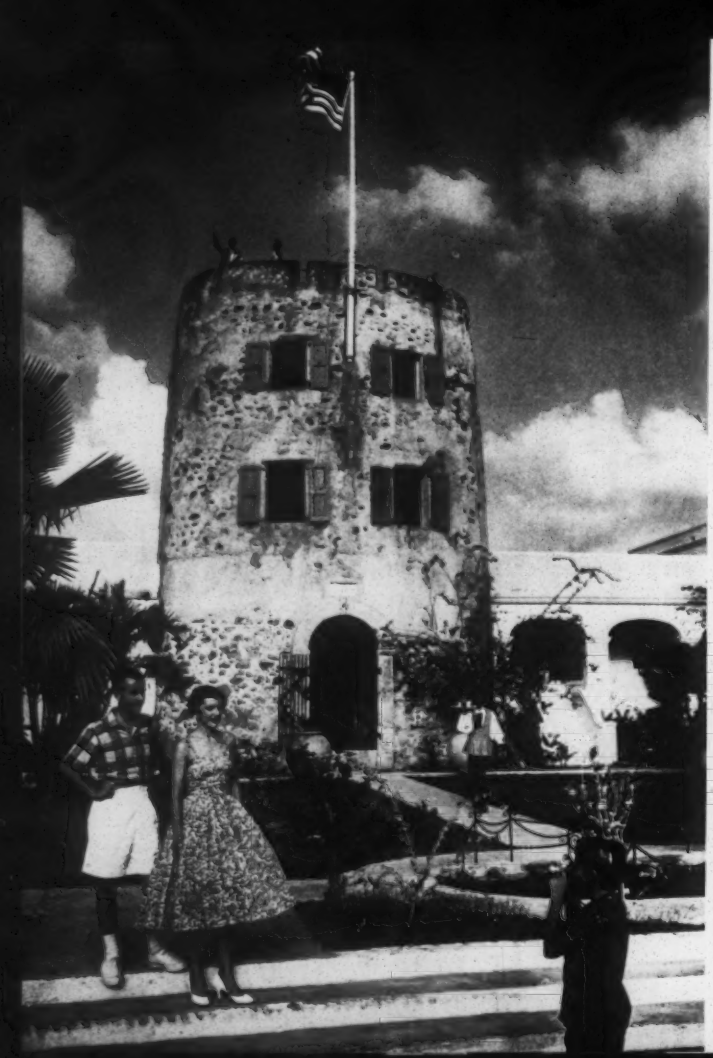
FRITZ HENLE

SPARKLING CARIBBEAN WATERS *lure pleasure boats to the Virgin Islands. But the weathered schooner above is strictly on business. She's a coastal trader putting out from Christiansted, St. Croix.*

Casting nets trap tropical fish in shoals off St. John, right. But future tourists to the new national park will spend most of their time strolling dazzling beaches that line St. John's tree-flanked coves and inlets (far right).

Many visitors will stay at Caneel Bay, Trunk Bay, or other spots.

CHARLES ALLMON, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF



VIRGIN ISLANDS

ISLE OF ST. JOHN BECOMES A NEW NATIONAL PARK

SWIMMING and boating in vivid blue Caribbean waters will delight visitors to Virgin Islands National Park, America's newest. Five thousand acres of St. John Island, third largest of more than 50 islands of the Virgins group, have been donated by Laurance S. Rockefeller (below, center) for our 29th national park. On December 1, the area will be officially handed over to the National Park Service.

The American Virgin Islands were purchased from Denmark in 1917. St. John had supported a thriving sugar enterprise, and relics of the old plantations remain. Some will be restored, complete with once-splendid manor houses, so that visitors will savor the island's history as well as its beauty.

Among wild hills dropping to the sea, beaches of white sand, placid coves, some 750 St. John residents lead a tranquil life untrammeled by traffic, telephones, newspapers, movie houses, or supermarkets.

"Walk half a mile from any of the island's settlements," wrote John Scofield in the February, 1956, *National Geographic*, "and you can spend a week without seeing another human."

Brilliant flowers seem to explode from volcanic terrain. More than a hundred kinds of birds flash through tropical forests. Growing wild are plums, mangoes, soursops, and tropical apples.

Many visitors stay in Bluebeard Castle (left), a hotel built around an old plantation watchtower on St. Thomas. From these quarters they take a ferry to the new park.—

CHARLES ALLMON, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF

FRITZ HENLE

CLIFF BOTTOMLEY, AUSTRALIAN INFORMATION BUREAU

MELBOURNE'S MAIN STADIUM, left, lies opposite swimming pavilion, auxiliary fields

flame to a great gas-burning cauldron. The Olympic Games were under way.

Few modern ceremonies have as much symbolism. This constant flame, so carefully kept alight, is a link with the distant, pagan past. Before competing, ancient Olympic athletes, chosen for immaculate reputation as well as physical abilities, made offerings at temples where eternal flames burned. The old Greek Games had so much religious significance that wars between rival city-states were temporarily halted so local stars could compete. The Olympiad—that period of four years between Games—became a Greek unit for telling time.

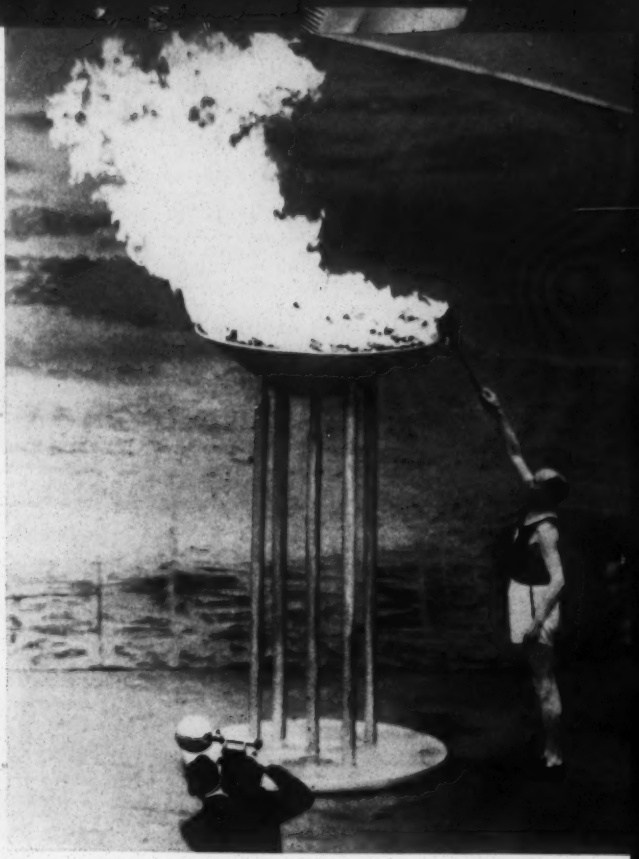
The ancient Olympics were abolished as a public nuisance in 394 A.D. by Emperor Theodosius of Rome. For fifteen centuries they were forgotten. In 1896, athletes from nine nations met at Athens in the first modern Games.

Gradually the quadrennial competitions fired the world's imagination. Wars barred three meetings so, though 1956 marks the XVIth Olympiad, the Melbourne Games are only the thirteenth official Olympics of the modern series.

But dozens of nations were represented at the opening of the main Games last week. More than 5,000 young men and women lined Melbourne's cricket ground when the white Olympic flag with intersecting rings of blue, yellow, black, green and red rose above all other flags and the flaming torch was brought in. Though these athletes probably outnumber tenfold those who matched muscles in Coroebus's day, they share the same purpose—to win honors for themselves, not for their nations, to extend honest effort and reap just reward. For 17 days, while the flame flickers above them, they are keeping alive the ancient Olympic spirit.—E.P.

Greek sculpture indicates age of hockey—still an Olympic sport

UMI



PAAVO NURMI, *Finland's Olympic hero, opens the Helsinki Games in 1952*

WIDE WORLD

OLYMPIC FLAME REKINDLED

A GREEK girl kneels above a pile of shavings in an earthenware pot. Carefully she aligns a magnifying glass to focus the sun's rays. The shavings smoke, then smoulder. A bright new flame is born amid ancient ruins of Olympia on the Peloponnesus, the mountainous southwestern peninsula of Greece (page 106). Here, in 776 B.C., a Greek sprinter named Coroebus won the equivalent of a 200-yard dash —first recorded victory of the Olympic Games.

The fire is transferred to a white marble bowl at Olympia's stadium. A Greek runner lights the chemicals in his aluminum alloy hand torch, then jogs off, holding the sputtering flame high. At the end of a kilometer he meets a second runner who lights his torch from the first and relays the flame onward. The 350th runner gets a reception at Athens. The flame is switched to a glass-and-pewter miner's lamp, goes aboard an airliner, and, flickering brightly, rides 8,545 miles to Australia's north coastal town of Darwin.

Now it boards a jet bomber for a flight to Cairns, in northern Queensland. A local sign painter, Constantine Verevis, whose parents came to Australia from a Greek island in the Aegean Sea, lights his torch from the miner's lamp. He lopes southward along the coast for a mile, then passes the flame to Anthony Mark, a pure-blooded Aborigine who thinks nothing of running the mail 70 miles in two days between "neighboring" missions.

These are the first two of 2,750 Australian runners who carry the Olympic Flame to Brisbane, to Sydney, to Canberra, and finally to Melbourne. Each man runs a mile. He's allowed seven minutes in rough country, six where the going is easy. His sixteen-inch torch weighs two pounds, will burn for 15 minutes.

On November 22 a panting miler approached huge Melbourne Cricket Ground where opening ceremonies for this year's Olympics were already under way. He entered the stadium, paced once around the track, and touched his

wielded cleaver, is longer in proportion to the area than any other country's—a mile of coast for every 20 square miles of land. Bays and gulfs abound—natural harbors for a people traditionally wed to water. Few Greeks need journey more than 40 miles to reach a sea—the Ionian on the west, the Mediterranean to the south, and the island-strewn Aegean stretching eastward toward Asia Minor. The narrow Gulf of Corinth almost cuts hand-shaped Peloponnesus from the mainland. Thus ships remain important in transportation.

In contrast, mountains rib most of inland Greece and its islands. Fabled gods lived on heights of grim Olympus (9,550 ft.) near the Gulf of Salonika. Many tourists have climbed this highest peak in Greece commanding a sweep of scenery. Southward spread the plains of Thessaly, dotted with grain fields. To the north lies Macedonia, green and hilly. Eastward across Salonika Bay are the three long fingers of the Chalcidice peninsula. Another peak sacred to pagan deities is Mount Parnassus, looming 8,061 feet, just north of the Gulf of Corinth, a lingering, entrancing sight on the mountain-browed land.

Though revered in legend and tradition, the mountains hold hardship for many Greeks today. Upland winters are long, sometimes cruel. Water is sometimes limited. Scarcely more than one acre in four can be cultivated. Mountain men often harvest with the sickle, bind by hand, beat with flails, and winnow in the wind. Shepherds, scarcely distinguishable from their forebears, lounge beside sheep and goats. But in many lowland areas modern tractors and threshing machines grumble.

As in ancient days, vineyards, olive and fruit trees bloom on thousands of Greek acres, adding to exports. The docks at Patras groan with olive oil, sheep, sheep hides, wine, and currants. Children living in Patras in the 500's B.C. saw similar activity. Today some olive oil stays at home to substitute for butter in a land of few cattle.

MOUNTAIN DWELLINGS in the Pindus rise from rocky fields where sturdy men farm

B. ANTHONY STEWART

UMI

JEAN AND FRANC SHOR, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF

Glorious Greece

YOU can visit Greece a hundred times—repetition won't dull the majesty of the Parthenon, overlooking Athens. Inspirer of architects and poets, the fifth century shrine for Phidias's gold and ivory statue of the goddess Athena remains a supreme architectural triumph. Here, on the lofty Acropolis, poems, dramas, and an antique valor came alive that people still clutch as models. Here also democratic government sank roots.

Little larger than the State of New York, Greece holds a lifetime of sights. Its coastline, slashed as by a blindly-

EXECUTIVE RESEARCH, INC.

Modern buildings line many Athens streets

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B. ANTHONY STEWART

ELITE EVZONES, skirts swirling with some 40 yards of material, are tough fighting men. On Salonika's water front, below, fishing vessels wait to buck Aegean waves where the flashing oars of triremes once churned

JEAN AND FRANC SHOR, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF

Many country women still fashion dresses from homespun materials. Bands of bright braid adorn jackets. Patient-fingered silversmiths work silver into bracelets.

But city life scarcely differs from what we know. Traffic rumbles, theatres are packed, dancing is popular. In Salonika, where streets are paved by lava, some of the nation's aspiring industries feed railroads.

Anywhere in Greece, compulsory education sends children seven to 12 packing off to school. Games of all sorts are joined, as when young men vied on the plain of Olympia.—S.H.

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